

**Claims**

- 1 1. A system for dispensing fuel, comprising:  
2 a nozzle for dispensing the fuel;  
3 a controller in communication with the nozzle for selectively causing the  
4 nozzle to dispense the fuel;  
5 a reader connected to the controller for reading data provided by a user  
6 and transferring the data to the controller; and  
7 a database for storing a record corresponding to the data that includes a  
8 monetary value;  
9 wherein, upon receipt of the data, the controller accesses the record and  
10 causes the nozzle to dispense the fuel.
- 1 2. The system of claim 1, wherein the data is dependent upon purchases  
2 made by the user.
- 1 3. The system of claim 1, wherein the data comprises optical data.
- 1 4. The system of claim 3, wherein the optical data comprises a bar code  
2 included on a receipt provided to the user.
- 1 5. The system of claim 1, wherein the data comprises magnetic data.
- 1 6. The system of claim 5, wherein the magnetic data comprises a magnetic  
2 strip included on a card.
- 1 7. The system of claim 1, wherein the record includes:

an index value corresponding to the data;  
a date of creation of the record; and  
a date of expiration of the record.

8. A computer implemented method for permitting a user to purchase fuel from a fuel dispenser, comprising:  
receiving payment from the user;  
if the payment received from the user exceeds a purchase price of the fuel,  
then providing the user with change in the form of a cash equivalent.

9. The method of claim 8, further including:  
creating a record in a database that includes an index value and a monetary value.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the record further includes a date of creation and a date of expiration for the record.

11. The method of claim 8, further including:  
permitting the user to purchase fuel from the fuel dispenser using the cash equivalent.

12. The method of claim 8, wherein the cash equivalent comprises a bar coded representation of the change.

13. The method of claim 8, wherein the cash equivalent comprises a magnetic representation of the change.

1 14. A computer program stored in a memory device for permitting a user to  
2 purchase fuel from a fuel dispenser, comprising instructions for:  
3 receiving payment from the user;  
4 if the payment received from the user exceeds a purchase price of the fuel,  
5 then providing the user with change in the form of a cash  
6 equivalent.

1 15. The computer program of claim 14, further including instructions for:  
2 creating a record in a database that includes an index value and a  
3 monetary value.

1 16. The computer program of claim 15, wherein the record further includes a  
2 date of creation and a date of expiration for the record.

1 17. The computer program of claim 14, further including instructions for:  
2 permitting the user to purchase fuel from the fuel dispenser using the cash  
3 equivalent.

1 18. The computer program of claim 14, wherein the cash equivalent comprises  
2 a bar coded representation of the change.

1 19. The computer program of claim 14, wherein the cash equivalent comprises  
2 a magnetic representation of the change.

1 20. A database stored in a memory device for use in a fuel dispensing system  
2 for permitting users to purchase fuel, comprising:

3 one or more records having:  
4 corresponding index values; and  
5 corresponding monetary values.

1 21. The database of claim 20, wherein the records further include:  
2 dates of creation; and  
3 dates of expiration.

1 22. The database of claim 20, wherein the monetary values correspond to  
2 monies owed to the users due to prior purchases of fuel by the users.

1 23. A receipt for use in a system for permitting users to purchase fuel from a  
2 fuel dispenser, comprising:  
3 a substrate; and  
4 indicia coupled to the substrate representative of monies owed to the  
5 users.

1 24. The receipt of claim 23, wherein the indicia includes a bar coded  
2 representation of the monies owed to the users.

1 25. The receipt of claim 23, wherein the indicia includes a magnetic  
2 representation of the monies owed to the users.